

THE

Ladies Defence:

O R,

The Bride-Woman's Counsellor Answer'd:

A

POEM.

IN A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

*Sir John Brute, Sir William Loveall,
Melissa, and a Parson.*

Written by a LADY.

L O N D O N,

Printed for John Deeve at Bernard's-Inn Gate in
Holborn, 1701.

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Melissa, and a Person.



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TO ALL

Ingenious Ladies.

LADIES,

THE Love of Truth, the tender Regard I have for your Honour, joynd with a just Indignation to see you so unworthily us'd, makes me assume the Confidence of imploying my Pen in your Service. The Knowledge I had of my Inability for so great a Task, made me for a while stifle my Resentments, as thinking it much better privately to lament the Injuries that were done you, than expose you by a weak Defence to the fresh Insults of a Person, who has not yet learnt to distinguish between Railing and Instruction, and who is so vain as to fancy, that the Dignity of his Function will render every thing he thinks fit to say becoming: But when I found that some Men were so far from finding fault with his Sermon, that they rather defended it, and express'd an ill-natur'd sort of Joy to see you ridicul'd, and that those few among 'em who were Pretenders to more Generosity and good Humour, were yet too proud, too much devoted to their Interest, and too indulgent to their Pleasures, to give themselves the Trouble of saying any thing in your Vindication, I had not the Patience to be Silent any longer. Besides it vex'd me to think he should have the Satisfaction of believing, that what by the Malice of some, the Neutrality of others, and the Sacredness of his Character, he was secur'd from all Opposition, and might triumph over you at his Pleasure: it also troubl'd me to find that but one of our own Sex had the Courage to enter the Lists with him: I know there are several other Ladies, who, if they wou'd be so kind to themselves, and you, as to undertake the Quarrel, wou'd manage it with more Learning, Eloquence and Address, than I dare pretend to, as being infinitely my Superiours in all the Indowments of the Mind; but since they think fit to decline it, I hope they will permit me to enter the Field, and try my Fortune with our mighty Antagonist. I assure 'em I do not do it out of an ambitious desire of being talk'd of, or with hopes of having it said, I can Write well; no, if I know my own Heart, I am far from any such Vanity, as being too well acquainted with my own Insufficiency, to entertain any such unbecoming Thoughts of my mean Performance. The following Poem is intirely the Result of that great Concern and Zeal I have for your Reputation; and if it happens to do you any Service, I have all that I aim at; and the only Favour I have to beg of you is, that you will be so generous as to receive it into your Protection, and so obliging as to let the Affection with which 'twas written, compensate for its Faults. I am sorry Mr. Sprint should have any occasion given him for so severe an Invektive, and I heartily wish my Sex wou'd keep a stricter Guard over their Passions, and amidst all the various Occurrences of Life, consult neither their Ease, the Gratification of their Humour, nor the Satisfaction of others, when 'tis in Opposition to their Reason; but having rightly inform'd themselves what ought to be done on each Emergency, go steadily on, without being disturb'd either at Unkindnesses, Reproaches, Affronts or Disappointments; that all who see 'em may have just cause to conclude, from the Regularity of their Actions, the Calmness of their Tempers, and the Serenity of their Looks, that there are no Uneasinesses within, and that they are infinitely better pleas'd with the secret Plaudits of their own Consciences, than they would be with the flattering Acclamations of a deceitful inconstant World; but such an Evenness, such a Tranquility of Mind, is not attainable without much Study, and the closest Application of Thought; it must be the work of Time, and the Effect of a daily Practice. But perhaps, while I am endeavouring to make you happy, and shewing you the way to transmit your Names with Honour to succeeding Ages, my kindness may be misconstru'd, and I thought guilty of unpardonable Arrogancy, for presuming to pre-

scribe

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scribe Rules to Persons, who already know much more than I can teach 'em. To free my self from this Imputation, I solemnly declare, That what I write is wholly intended for such as are on the same Level with my self, and have not been blest with a learned and ingenious Education, and cannot boast of such a strength of Resolution, such a constancy of Mind, such a depth of Reason and solidity of Judgment, as is requisite, in order to the obtaining that desirable Firmness, and, (if I may be allow'd to call it so) Inflexibility of Soul, which I have been recommending; and not for those who, by the greatness of their Virtue, and the Sublimity of their Wit, are rais'd to a Height above me; on such I content my self to gaze at an awful distance, and am pleas'd to see, notwithstanding what has been said to the contrary by some envious Detractors, still among us Women that are shining Examples of Piety, Prudence, Moderation, Patience, and all other valuable Qualities; by such as these I should take it as a Favour to be instructed; and would they by a generous Condescension give themselves the Trouble of directing us in the management of our Lives, we should be for ever bound to pay 'em the highest Retributions. 'Tis only to such as are in the lowest Form, to the meanest Proficients in the School of Virtue, that I take the Liberty of giving Advice. So well, so intirely well I love my Sex, that if 'twere in my Power they should be all wholly faultless, and as much admir'd for the Comprehensive-ness of their Knowledge, as they are now despis'd for their Ignorance, and have Souls as beauteous as their Faces, Thoughts as bright and sparkling as their Eyes: And in what Station so ever Providence thinks fit to place 'em, I would earnestly desire 'em, as a thing exceedingly for their Honour, to be careful to observe a just Decorum, and neither suffer themselves to be transported with Joy when they are Happy, or dispirited when they are Miserable; but to be humble, kind, sincere, and easie of Access, when Great, Liberal when Rich, Sedate, Chearful and Contented when Poor, free from Revenge, and ready to forgive when injur'd, the same when reproach'd or applauded, when caress'd, or neglected: And if it is their hard Fortune to be marry'd to Men of brutish unfociable Tempers, to Monsters in Humane Shape, to Persons who are at open defiance with their Reason, and fond of nothing but their Folly, and under no other Government but that of their irregular Passions, I would perswade them to struggle with their Afflictions, and never leave contending, 'till they have gain'd an absolute Victory over every repining Thought, every uneasie Reflection: And tho' 'tis extremely difficult, yet I wou'd advise 'em to pay 'em as much Respect, and to obey their Commands with as much readiness, as if they were the best and most endearing Husbands in the World; this, will not only put a stop to the invidious Censures of their spiteful Enemies, but give 'em the possession of that inward Joy, that unspeakable Satisfaction, which naturally arises from the apprehension of having done good and laudable Actions: In order to the gaining such a happy disposition of Mind, I would desire 'em seriously to consider what those things are which they can properly call their own, and of which Fortune cannot deprive 'em, and on these alone they ought to terminate their Desires, and not vainly extend 'em to those things which are not within their Power, as Honours, Riches, Reputation, Health, and Beauty; for they being Goods which they cannot bestow on themselves, and of which they may have but a very transient possession, they ought to enjoy 'em with indifferency, and look on 'em only as Gifts, which the Almighty Donor freely and liberally gives, and which he may, when he thinks fit, resume without the least injustice: This, if often and heedfully reflected on, will make 'em moderate their Desires, and teach 'em never with Earnestness to wish for any thing that has no dependance on 'em, nor to entertain an Aversion for things that 'tis not in their Power to avoid. I would have them also to consider that those things which are generally accounted Evils, as Poverty, Disgraces, the loss of Children and Friends, with all other Calamities incident to the Humane Nature, are not really so; for if they were, they would be so to all, which 'tis evident they are not. Poverty, which is so much dreaded by some, and too often shunn'd at the expence both of their Conscience and Honour, has been courted by others; and there have been Persons who have look'd on their Wealth as a Burden, and thrown it off as an unnecessary Load, esteeming themselves rich enough when they have had wherewithall to satisfy their Hungar and their Thirst, and to defend themselves from the Injuries of the Weather. 'Tis but little that Nature desires, and we may be as happy in Cottages as in Pallaces. Disgrace, if they are satisfi'd of their own Innocency, ought

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to give 'em no disturbance. 'Tis but a Phantom, and subsists only in the Imagination. Reproachful injurious Language can do them no hurt, unless they themselves contribute to it. The having it said they are Proud, Passionate, Censorious, Extravagant or whatsoever else Malicious People are pleas'd to accuse them of, does not make them so, neither will they be the less regarded by those who are thoroughly acquainted with their innate Worth and Value. 'Tis to the few Wise and Virtuous they ought to endeavour to approve themselves; as for the unthinking many, the Giddy Multitude, who are ready to Deifie this Day, those whom they will despise, vilifie, and affront to morrow, 'tis below 'em to court their Favour, or desire their Approbation; their Applauses being as little to be valu'd as their Censures. As for their Children and Friends, they, like the former, are of the number of those Goods to which they have no right, and are to be parted with not repiningly, but thankfully; their injoying them so long being a favour, for which they ought to make a grateful Acknowledgment, and not to gratifie a selfish, disingenuous Humour, by murmuring at the All-wise Disposer of Events, who knows much better than they what is good and convenient for them; and as long as their Virtue, their Prudence, their Patience, their Integrity are left, they may retire into themselves, and there be happy without any other Company; neither are Sicknefs and Death altogether so formidable as they are generally represented; the First may be overcome by a Mind resolv'd and constant; and amidst the greatest Pains 'tis some Consolation to think 'twill be Glorious and Honourable to indure them with Courage. As for the Last, which is look'd on as the most terrible and shocking of all those things which are commonly call'd Evils, as being the Privation of Life, and a thing abhorrent to Nature, 'tis no more than drawing the Curtain, and enlarging the Prospect: 'Twill give them a Writ of Ease, a kind Discharge from all the Numerous Miseries of Life, and place them at once beyond the reach of Envy, and the Power of Fortune. That such great and momentous Truths as these may become familiar to their Minds, I would perswade 'em, instead of spending so much of their Time in reading Plays and Romances, to bestow a part of it in studying Moral Philosophy, which they will find to be of very great use toward the bettering and informing of their Understandings, the improving their Judgments, and the regulating their Wills and Affections: From what I have said, I would not have it thought I dislike Plays and Romances; I assure you I think 'em very innocent, and very agreeable Diversions, especially the First. Tragedies fill the Mind with noble Ideas, and inspire us with great and generous Sentiments; and Comedies show us our Faults in the clearest Light; in them we see our Weaknesses expos'd, and all our darling Follies ridicul'd; and 'tis our selves alone we ought to blame, if we receive no Advantage from them, for they instruct at the same time they entertain. But the Books I would chiefly recommend, next to the Sacred Scripture, and Devotional Discourses, are, Seneca's Morals, together with those of Plutarch, and the Philosophy of Epictetus; that excellent Man, who in the worst of Times, and the most vicious Court in the World, kept his Integrity inviolable, and was still true to his Principles, and constant to himself amidst all the Inconveniencies, Discouragement and Disgraces that attended him: Neither the Indisposition of his Body, nor the Barbarity of a Savage Master, nor that Poverty in which he spent his Life, cou'd make him do or say any thing unworthy of himself, or unbecoming a Philosopher. I would likewise recommend to them Gassendi's Morals; I mean, the Three Discourses of Happiness, Virtue and Liberty, collected from his Works by the learned Monsieur Bernier. To these I desire 'em to add both Ancient and Modern Histories; in the reading of which they will see the Rise and Fall of mighty Monarchies, great Kingdoms springing from their Ruines, and little States supporting themselves for several Ages amidst numerous and powerful Enemies, by the force of good Laws, and the advantages of just and prudent Institutions, together with the Mischiefs that Luxury, Pride, Ambition, Avarice, and the desire of absolute Dominion have often involv'd 'em in. They will there also see Men rais'd from the Dust, from low and obscure Beginnings, and exalted to the greatest Height of Power, the utmost extent of Humane Glory; and then all on a sudden, by an unexpected reverse of Fate, a strange and surprizing turn of Fortune, depriv'd of all their Grandeur, and reduc'd to their Original mean-ness. Princes sometimes on Thrones, and sometimes in Prison. Good Men induring the Punishments due to Vice, and vicious Men receiving the Rewards belonging to Vertue. There they will find a Socrates dying by Poyson, a Regulus expiring in Tor-ments,

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ments, an Aristides, Camillus and Rutilius, banish'd by their ungrateful Country-Men; a Pompey treacherously slain, a Caesar murder'd by his Friends, a Belisarius begging his Bread, and a Mauritius with his whole Family falling by the Hands of a rebellious Subject. Sure such Objects as these will keep them from wondering at little Accidents, or grieving at trifling Disappointments, from sinking under every small Affliction, and make them entertain a very low Opinion of Humane Greatness; such Vicissitudes as these will let 'em see there's no dependance on any thing here; neither Virtue, Knowledge, Prudence, Quality, nor Power; neither the greatest Obligations, the closest Ties of Conscience and Honour, nor yet a Spotless Innocency of Life, and irreproachable Integrity of Manners, are able to defend their Possessors from the Outrages of Fortune, or from the invenom'd Tongues, and bloody Designs of cruel and ambitious Men. If they should find themselves tyr'd, and their Minds too much sadden'd by these melancholy Reflections, I would advise 'em to read the Poets, and acquaint themselves with all the Finenesses of those great Masters of Wit and Language, Homer, Anacreon, Theocritus, Lucretius, Manilius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal and Persius, are now naturaliz'd, and wear an English Dress; and we have the happiness to have Poets of our own, who for their good Sense, flight of Fancy, Purity of Stile, and Elevation of Thought, deserve the highest admiration. And that the Men may have no just Cause to upbraid them with their being ignorant of any thing that is worthy of their Knowledge, I would also perswade 'em to read such Boooks as treat of the several Parts of the Earth, and which give Geographical Descriptions of Places; they will find the Travels of ingenious, inquisitive Men infinitely delightful, and they will every where in their Relations meet with things very entertaining, and diverting, as well as useful, it being extreamly pleasant to observe the different Opinions, Manners, Customs, Interests, and Habits of the several Inhabitants of the World, and to know what is remarkable in each Country, and peculiar to it. Such Studies as these, together with those which I have mention'd before, will so wholly imploy their Thoughts, and so intirely fill up those Intervals of Time which they can spare from their Domestick Affairs, and the necessary Concerns of Life, that they will have no leisure to inquire into the Transactions of their Neighbourhood, or to make uncharitable Reflections on their Conduct; nor will there be any Room left for the ordinary Impertinences of Conversation: They will know how to entertain themselves, and others, both advantagiously and agreeably, and will be always easie and pleas'd, whether alone, or in Company; neither the Badness of their Husbands, the Unkindnesses of their Friends, the Censoriousness of an envious malicious World, nor the most unwelcome Turns of Fortune will give them any Trouble, or disturb their Repose. I beg your pardon for the length of this Address, and for the liberty I have taken to speak my Thoughts so freely, which I do not doubt but you will readily grant to one, who has no other Design but that of doing you Justice, nor no higher Ambition, than that of letting the World see with how much Sincerity, Respect and Ardour, she is,

L A D I E S,

Your most Humble

and Devoted Servant.

M—y C—

THE

THE PREFACE to the READER.

THE Book, which has been the occasion of the insuing Poem, was presented to me by its Author, of whom, notwithstanding he has been pleas'd to treat us with the utmost Severity and Neglect, I think my self oblig'd in Justice to say, that he is a Person of Learning. What his Reasons were for using us so roughly, I know not; perhaps he did it to let us see his Wit, who has had the ill Fortune to converse with Women of ungovernable Tempers, whose Passions have got the Ascendant of their Reason; such I think cannot be too harshly treated, and the greatest kindness that can be done 'em, is to bring 'em (if 'tis possible) to the Knowledge of themselves, and their Duty, and by shewing them their Faults, endeavour to depress those towering Imaginations. But 'tis hard that all should suffer for the Failures and Indiscretions of some; that those who are willing to give up themselves intirely to the Conduct of Reason, who make it their Study to live according to the strictest Rules of Vertue, and are so far from indulging themselves in their Follies, that they esteem Reproofs as the greatest Favours that can be shown 'em, and are contented that all Mankind should be Judges of their Actions; whom Passions cannot byass, nor Interest tempt, nor Ill Usage provoke to do or say any thing unworthy of themselves, should be rank'd with Criminals, and have no Deference pay'd 'em: 'Tis for their Sakes alone I have made the following Remarks. I have done it by way of Dialogue, and those Expressions which I thought would be indecent in the Mouth of a Reverend Divine, are spoken by Sir *John Brute*, who has all the extraordinary Qualifications of an accomplish'd Husband; and to render his Character compleat, I have given him the Religion of a Wit, and the good Humour of a Critick. I am afraid the Clergy will accuse me of Atheism for making Sir *John* speak so irreverently of them; but before they condemn me, I beg 'em to be so just as to consider, that I do not speak my own Thoughts, but what one might rationally suppose a Man of his Character will say on such Occasions: And to prevent their having any misapprehensions of me, I do assure 'em, that for all such of their Order as are pious and ingenuous Men, whose Conversations are instructive, and whose Lives are conformable to those holy Truths they teach, none can have a higher Veneration than I: And if such as these find any thing in my Poem that they dislike, they will oblige me in letting me know it, and I promise 'em I will retract it. Had he treated us with a little more Respect, and instead of the surly Sourness of a Cynick, express'd himself with the good Humour of an English Man, and the soft and endearing Mildness of a Christian, I should have thought my self oblig'd to have return'd him Thanks for his Instructions. That we are generally less Knowing, and less Rational than the Men, I cannot but acknowledge; but I think 'tis oftener owing to the illness of our Education, than the weakness of our Capacities. The learned *F. Malebranch* says, *'Tis in a certain Temperature of the Largeness and Agitation of the Animal Spirits, and conformity with the Fibres of the Brain, that the Strength of Parts consists*; and he tells us, That Women are sometimes blest with that just Temperature, and are Learned, Courageous, and capable of every thing; and instead of that nauseous Jargon, and those impertinent Stories with which our Maids usually entertain us in our younger Years, taught the Languages of the Schools, and accustom'd to the reading of Histories, and Books of Morality; and did our Husbands treat us with that Kindness, that Sincerity, I will not say with that Respect, for fear that should be thought too much for a Wife, but only with that common Civility which is due to Strangers, they would meet with a grateful return, and have much less reason to complain. Would the Men do me the honour to take my Advice, I am confident they would for the future have less occasion to complain. First; I would have them be more judicious in their Choice, and prefer Virtue and good Sense, before either Riches, Beauty or Quality; these, joyn'd with an agreeable Humour, will make them happier than the greatest Affluence of Wealth, or than all the Charms of

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of a lovely Face; and if 'tis their good Fortune to meet with such, I would in the second Place perswade 'em to treat them with all that Affection and Tenderness which they deserve, and leave intirely to their management the Affairs of the Kitchen, and those other little Concerns of the Family which seem to be below their inspection. And Lastly, I would have them look upon them as Friends, as Persons fit to be confided in, and trusted with their Designs, as such whose Interest is inseparably united with theirs: by such Methods as these, they would not only win their Love, but preserve it, and engage 'em to a reciprocal Esteem; and when once they have secur'd their Affection, they need not doubt of their Obedience; the desire to please will render the most difficult Commands easie. Should I give a particular Answer to each Paragraph, I should not only tire the Readers Patience, but my own, for which Reason I intend only to take notice of some very remarkable things, such as his saying, We make it our business before we are married to lay Snares for Hearts, and imprint, Come love me, in the pleasantness of our Looks, in the neatness of our Dress, in the Discretion of our Words, and in the Obligingness of our Deportment. Now what can be vainer than to think, that while the Men are Admirers of themselves, and aim at nothing but their own Satisfaction, the Women should be wholly destitute of Self-love, and do nothing to please themselves; or that Pleasantness, Vivacity and Chearfulness, which are the Effects of an internal Joy and Tranquility of Mind, should continue when the Cause ceases? Perhaps before they were marry'd, they had nothing to discompose them, no Cares to disturb their Thoughts, no Unkindnesses to resent, nothing to pall their Delights; but now the case may be alter'd; they may meet with a thousand Discouragements, with Troubles capable of altering the gayest Temper; and what influences the Mind, is ordinarily apparent in the Countenance, and discovers it self by a melancholy dejected Air, and too often occasions an Incoherency in the Discourse, a Neglect in the Dress, and an indecent Carelessness and Moroseness in the Carriage; so that all those things with which he upbraids us, ought to be rather look'd on as our Misfortune, than our Fault; and if he would have us to be such as we formerly were, he must perswade the Men to be the same they were when they made their first Addresses, and not, when married, think of making Innovations, or of introducing *Persian* Customs; neither give the Ribbon Weavers the Trouble of making Motto's on our Ribbons, or us the fatigue of imbroidering *Love, Honour and Obedy*, on our Head Dresses, for fear, after all our labour, such Ornaments shou'd appear as ridiculous and antiquated as *Passive Obedience* wou'd, if 'twere to be worn by him and the rest of his Brethren. But yet permit me to say, 'twould be very difficult for a rational ingenious Woman, were she Mistress of never so much Vertue, and blest with the greatest Strength of Resolution, if 'twere her ill Fortune to be married to a foolish, passionate, stingy, sottish Husband, to have as high an Esteem for him, as if he had all those good Qualities which she sees, and cannot but like in others: and I think she may be allow'd secretly to wish, that he were as wise, as generous, as temperate, as such a Man, as much a Master of his Passions, as obliging, and sincere as another. There is one thing which I think does more contribute to the Unhappiness of the married State, than any of those which he has mention'd, and that is, Parents forcing their Children to Marry contrary to their Inclinations; Men believe they have a right to dispose of their Children as they please, and they think it below them to consult their Satisfaction: 'Tis no matter what their Thoughts are, if the Fathers like, 'tis enough: And is it rational to suppose, that such Matches can ever be fortunate? If the Men are prudent, they will carry it civilly to their Wives; and the Women if they are discreet, will be obsequious and respectful to their Husbands, but there cannot be that Friendship, that Tenderness, that Unity of Affection which ought to be in that sacred State. I could say much more on so copious a Subject, but I fear I have already weary'd my Reader, to whose Trouble I will not add, by making trifling Apologies for what I have written: The liberty I take, I am willing to give, and the ingenious Author may, if he pleases, Animadvert as freely on my Book, as I have done on his; if he finds any thing in it that can justly give him any Offence, I beg his Pardon for it; and I do assure him, that what I have writ is wholly the Result of that great Concern and Kindness I have for my Sex, and is so far from proceeding from the least Disrespect to him, that I am ready to own to the whole World, that I think for his Piety he deserves an universal Esteem.

The Ladies DEFENCE: OR, A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

*Sir John Brute, Sir William Loveall, Melissa;
and a Parson.*

Sir John. **W**elcome, thou brave Defender of our
Right;
Till now, I thought you knew not how to Write:
Dull heavy Morals did your Pens imploy;
And all your business was to pall our Joy:
With frightful Tales our Ears you still did grate,
And we with awful Reverence heard you prate;
Heard you declaim on Vice, and blame the Times,
Because we impudently shar'd your Crimes;
Those darling Sins you wholly wou'd ingross:
And when disturb'd, and fretting at your loss,
With whining Tones, and a pretended Zeal,
Saw you the Rancour of your Minds Reveal:
Till now, none of your Tribe were ever kind,
Good Humour is alone to you confin'd;
You, who against those Terrours of our Lives,
Those worst of Plagues, those Furies call'd our Wives,
Have shew'd your Anger in a Strain Divine,
Resentment sparkles in each poignant Line.
Sure you've the Fate of wretched Husbands met,
And 'tis your own Misfortune you regret;
You cou'd not else with such a feeling Sense
Expatiate on each Fault, and Blazon each Offence.

How

How happy, O Sir *William*, is your Life!
 You have not known the Trouble of a Wife:
 Your Rural Cares you undisturb'd can mind,
 And 'midst your Brutal Subjects Pleasure find:
 Your Snowy Flocks you with delight can view,
 They are both innocent, and pretty too:
 And when from Business you your Thoughts unbend,
 You can with Joy the Noble Chase attend,
 Or when you please Drink freely with a Friend.
 No frowning Female stands observing by,
 No Children fright you with their hideous Cry;
 None dare contend; none your Commands dispute;
 You like the Great *Mogul*, are Absolute:
 Supream in all things; from our Slavery free,
 And tast the Sweets of envy'd Liberty.

Sir William. The beauteous Sex I ever did revere,
 And can't with patience these Reflections hear:
 To them I've long a constant Homage pay'd,
 And with Delight each Charming Face survey'd.
 I've had of Mistresses a numerous Store,
 The Fam'd *Anacreon* could not boast of more;
 Yet each was Good, each with Perfections blest,
 And each by turns has triumph'd in my Breast.
 That I'm unmarr'y'd, is my Fate, not Choice:
 I in a happy Bondage should rejoyce;
 And thank my Stars, if they wou'd yet incline
 Some lovly She to be for ever mine:
 Then wonder not to hear me take their Part,
 And plead for the dear Idols of my Heart.
 Spightful Invectives shou'd no Patrons find,
 They are the Shame, and Venom of the Mind.

Parson. Not led by Passion, but by Zeal inspir'd,
 I've told the Women what's of them requir'd:
 Shew'd them their Duty in the clearest Light,
 Adorn'd with all the Charms that cou'd invite:
 Taught them their Husband to Obey and Please,
 And to their Humours sacrifice their Ease:

Give

Give up their Reason, and their Wills resign;
 And every Look, and every Thought confine.
 Sure, this, Detraction you can't justly call?
 'Tis kindly meant, and 'tis address'd to All.

Melissa. Must Men command, and we alone obey,
 As if design'd for Arbitrary Sway;
 Born petty Monarchs, and, like *Homer's* Gods,
 See all subjected to their haughty Nods?
Narcissus-like, you your own Graces view,
 Think none deserve to be admir'd but you:
 Your own Perfections always you adore,
 And think all others despicably poor:
 We have our Faults, but you are all Divine,
 Wisdom does in your meanest Actions shine:
 Just, Pious, Chast, from every Passion free,
 By Learning rais'd above Humanity.
 For every Failure you a Covering find;
 Rage is a Noble Bravery of Mind:
 Revenge, a Tribute due to injur'd Fame;
 And Pride, but what transcendant Worth does claim:
 Cowards are Wary, and the Dull are Grave,
 Fops are Genteel, and Hectoring Bullies Brave:
 Such as live High, regardless of Expence,
 Are Generous Men, and ever bless'd with Sense:
 Base Avarice Frugality you call,
 And he's a prudent Man who grasps at all:
 Who to be Rich, does Labour, Cheat, and Lie;
 Does to himself the Sweets of Life deny,
 And wretched lives, that he may wealthy dye.
 Thus to each Vice you give some specious Name,
 And with bright Colours varnish o're your Shame.
 But unto us is there no Deference due?
 Must we pay all, and look for none from you?
 Why are not Husbands taught as well as we;
 Must they from all Restraints, all Laws be free?
 Passive Obedience you've to us transferr'd,
 And we must drudge in Paths where you have err'd:
 That antiquated Doctrine you disown;
 'Tis now your Scorn, and fit for us alone.

Parson.

Parson. Love and Respect, are, I must own, your due,
But not till there's Obedience paid by you :
Submission, and a studious Care to please,
May give a Right to Favors great as these :
But if Subjection is by you deny'd,
You'll fall the unpitty'd Victims of your Pride :
We then all Husband justly may appear,
And Talk, and Frown, 'till we have taught your Fear.

Sir John. Yes, as we please, we may our Wives chastise,
'Tis the Prerogative of being Wife :
They are but Fools, and must as such be us'd.
Heaven! how I blush to see our Pow'r abus'd :
To see Men doat upon a Female Face,
And all the Manly Roughness of their Sex disgrace!

Melissa. Not thus you talk'd when you *Lenera* lov'd,
By softer Passion, sure, your Soul was mov'd,
Then at her Feet, false Man, you flattering lay,
And pray'd, and vow'd, and sigh'd your Hours away ;
Admir'd her Face, her Shape, her Mein, her Air,
And swore that none was so divinely fair ;
None had such Charms, none else the wondrous Art
To gain th' intire possession of your Heart.
Having expended your whole Stock of Sense,
And quite exhausted all your Eloquence,
When not one Phrase was left of all your Store,
Asham'd to have it known you were so poor,
You made your Silence want of words supply,
And look'd, as if your Love would make you die :
Shew'd all your Art, your Native Guile display'd,
And gaz'd till you had won the thoughtless Maid.

Sir John. I lov'd her, 'till to her I was confin'd :
But who can long to what's his own be kind ?
Plagues seize the Wretch who ty'd the cursed Knot,
Let him be damn'd : Eternally forgot.

Mel. There spoke the Husband ; all the Fiend reveal'd :
Your Passion utters what's by most conceal'd.
O that my Sex safe Infidels would live,
And no more Credit to your Flatteries give.

Mistrust

Mistrust your Vows, despise your little Arts,
 And keep a constant Guard upon their Hearts:
 Unhappy they, who by their Duty led,
 Are made the Partners of a hated Bed;
 And by their Fathers Avarice or Pride,
 To Empty Fops, or Nauseous Clowns are ty'd;
 Or else constrain'd to give up all their Charms
 Into an old ill-humour'd Husbands Arms,
 Who hugs his Bags, and never was inclin'd
 To be to ought besides his Money kind,
 On that he dotes, and to increase his Wealth,
 Wou'd Sacrifice his Conscience, Ease and Health,
 Give up his Children, and devote his Wife,
 And live a Stranger to the Joys of Life.
 Who's always positive in what is Ill,
 And still a Slave to his imperious Will:
 Averse to any thing he thinks will please,
 Still Sick, and still in love with his Disease:
 With Fears, with Discontent, with Envy curst,
 To all uneasie, and himself the worst.
 A spiteful Censor of the present Age,
 Or dully jesting, or deform'd with Rage.
 These call for Pity, since it is their Fate;
 Their Friends, not they, their Miseries create:
 They are like Victims to the Alter led,
 Born for Destruction, and for Ruine bred:
 Forc'd to sigh out each long revolving Year,
 And see their Lives all spent in Toil and Care.
 But such as may be from this Bondage free,
 Who've no Abridgers of their Liberty;
 No cruel Parents, no imposing Friends,
 To make 'em wretched for their private Ends,
 From me shall no Commiseration have,
 If they themselves to barbarous Men inflave.
 They'd better Wed among the Savage kind,
 And be to generous Lyons still confin'd;
 Or match'd to Tygers, who would gentler prove
 Than you, who talk of Piety and Love,

Words, whose Sense, you never understood,
And for that Reason, are nor kind, nor good.

Parson. Why all this Rage? we merit not your hate;
'Tis you alone disturb the Marriage State:
If to your Lords you strict Allegiance pay'd,
And their Commands submissively obey'd:
If like wise Eastern Slaves with trembling Awe
You watch'd their Looks, and made their Will your Law,
You wou'd both Kindness and Protection gain,
And find your duteous Care was not in vain.
This, I advis'd, this, I your Sex have taught;
And ought Instruction to be call'd a Fault?
Your Duty was I knew the harder part;
Obedience being a harsh, uneasy Art:
The Skill to Govern, Men with ease can learn;
We're soon instructed in our own Concern.
But you need all the Aid that I can give,
To make you unrepining Vassals live.
Heav'n, you must own, to you has been less kind,
You cannot boast our Steadiness of Mind,
Nor is your Knowledge half so unconfin'd;
We can beyond the Bounds of Nature see,
And dare to Fathom vast Infinity.
Then soar aloft, and view the Worlds on high,
And all the inmost Mansions of the Sky:
Gaze on the Wonders, on the Beauties there,
And talk with the bright Phantoms of the Air:
Observe their Customs, Policy and State,
And pry into the dark Intrigues of Fate:
Nay more than this, we Atoms can divide,
And all the Questions of the Schools decide:
Turn Falseness into Truth, and Impudence to Shame,
Change Malice into Zeal, and Infamy to Fame,
Makes Vices Virtues, Honour but a Name,
Nothing's too hard for our Almighty Sense,
But you, not blest with *Rhebus* influence,
Wither in Shades; with nauseous Dulness curst,
Born Fools, and by resembling Idiots Nurst.

Then

Then taught to Work, to Dance, to Sing and Play,
 And vainly trifle all your Hours away,
 Proud that you've learnt the little Arts to please,
 As being incapable of more than these:
 Your shallow Minds can nothing else contain,
 You were not made for Labours of the Brain;
 Those are the Manly Toils which we sustain. }
 We, like the Ancient Giants, stand on high,
 And seem to bid Defiance to the Sky,
 While you poor worthless Insects crawl below,
 And less than Mites t'our exalted Reason show.
 Yet by Compassion for your Frailties moy'd,
 I've strove to make you fit to be belov'd.

Sir John. That is a Task exceeds your utmost Skill,
 Spite of your Rules, they will be Women still;
 Wives are the common Nuisance of the State;
 They all our Troubles, all our Cares create, }
 And more than Taxes, ruin an Estate.
 Woud they, like *Lucifer*, were doom'd to Hell,
 That we might here without disturbance dwell,
 Then we should uncontroul'd our Wealth imploy,
 Drink high, and take a full Repast of Joy:
 Damn Care, and bravely roar away our Time,
 And still be busied in some noble Crime,
 Like to the happier Brutes, live unconfi'd,
 And freely chuse among the Female kind.
 So liv'd the mighty Thunderer of old,
 Lov'd as he pleas'd, and scorn'd to be controul'd:
 No Kindred Names his Passion could restrain:
 Like him I'll think all Nice Distinctions vain;
 And tir'd with one, to a new Mistress fly,
 Blest with the Sweets of dear Variety.

Melissa. To live at large a Punishment wou'd prove
 To one acquainted with the Joys of Love.
 Sincere Affection centers but in one,
 And cannot be to various Objects shown.
 Woud Men prove kind, respectful, just and true,
 And unto us their former Vows renew,

They

They wou'd have then no Reason to complain,
 But 'till that time Reproofs will be in vain.
 Some few perhaps, whom Virtue has refin'd;
 Who in themselves no vicious Habits find,
 Who sway'd by Reason, and by Honour led,
 May in the thorny Paths of Duty tread;
 And still unwear'd with your utmost Spight,
 In the blest Euges of their Minds delight:
 But still the most will their Resentment show,
 And by deplor'd effects let you their Anger know.

Sir Wil. She's in the right. They still wou'd virtuous
 prove,

Were they but treated with Respect and Love.
 Your barbarous Usage does Revenge produce,
 It makes 'em bad, and is their just Excuse.
 You've set 'em Copies, and dare you repine,
 If they transcribe each black, detested Line?

Parson. I dare affirm those Husbands that are ill,
 Were they unmarried, wou'd be faultless still.
 If we are cruel, they have made us so;
 What e'er they suffer, to themselves they owe:
 Our Love on their Obedience does depend,
 We will be kind, when they no more offend.

Melissa. Of our Offences who shall Judges be?

Parf. For that great Work Heaven has commission'd me.
 I'm made one of his Substitutes below,
 And from my Mouth unerring Precepts flow;
 I'll prove your Duty from the Law Divine,
 Celestial Truth in my Discourse shall shine.
 Truth drest in all the Gaieties of Art,
 In all that Wit can give, or Eloquence impart.
 Attend, attend, the August Message hear,
 Let it imprint a reverential Fear.
 'Twill on your Mind a vital Influence have,
 If while I speak, you're Silent as the Grave.
 The sacred Oracles for deference call,
 When from my Oily Tongue they smoothly fall.
 First, I'll by Reason prove you should obey,
 Next, point you out the most compendious way,

And

And then th' important Doctrine I'll improve,
 These are the Steps by which I mean to move.
 And first, because you were by Heav'n design'd
 To be the Comforts of our Nobler Kind:
 For us alone with tempting Graces blest,
 And for our Sakes by bounteous Nature drest.
 With all the choicest Beauties of her Store,
 And made so fine, that she cou'd add no more.
 And dare you now, as if it were in Spight,
 Become our Plagues, when form'd for our Delight?
 Consider next, we are for you accurst,
 We sinn'd, but you, alas! were guilty first.
 Unhappy *Eve* unto her Ruin led,
 Tempted by Pride, on the bright Poyson fed;
 Then to her thoughtless Husband gave a Part,
 He eat, seduc'd by her bewitching Art.
 And 'twas but just that for so great a Fault
 She shou'd be to a strict Subjection brought;
 So strict, her Thoughts should be no more her own,
 But all subservient made to him alone.
 Had she not err'd, her Task had easie been,
 He ow'd his change of Humour to her Sin.
 From that unhappy Hour he Peevish grew;
 And she no more of solid Pleasure knew.
 His Looks a fullen Haughtiness did wear,
 And all his Words were Scornful, or Severe;
 His Mind so rough, Love could not harbour there. }
 The gentle God in hast forsook his Seat,
 And frighted fled to some more soft Retreat: }
 His Place was by a thousand Ills possess'd,
 The crouding Dæmons throng'd into his Breast,
 And left no Room for tender Passions there:
 His Sons with him in the sad Change did share.
 His Sourness soon Hereditary grew;
 And its Effects are still perceiv'd by you.
 With all your Patience, all your Toil and Art,
 You scarce can keep the surly Husband's Heart.
 Your Kindness hardly can Esteem create;
 Yet do not blame him, since it is his Fate:

D

But

But on your Mother *Eve* alone reflect;
 Thank her for his Moroseness and Neglect:
 Who with a fond indulgent Spouse being blest,
 And like a Mistress Courted, and Carest,
 Was not contented with her present State,
 But must her own Unhappiness create;
 And by ill Practices his Temper spoil,
 And make what once was easie, prove a Toil.
 If you would live as it becomes a Wife,
 And raise the Honour of a marry'd Life,
 You must the useful Art of wheedling try,
 And with his various Humours still comply:
 Admire his Wit, praise all that he does do,
 And when he's vex'd, do you be pettish too:
 When he is sad, a cloudy Aspect wear,
 And talk to him with a dejected Air:
 When Rage transports him, be as mad as he,
 And when he's pleas'd, be easie, gay and free.
 You'll find this Method will effectual prove,
 Inhance your Merit, and secure his Love.

Sir Job. It would: But Women will be Cross and Proud;
 When we are merry, Passionate and Loud:
 When we are angry, than they frolick grow,
 And Laugh, and Sing, and no Compliance show.
 In Contradictions they alone delight,
 Are still a Curse, and never in the Right.
 By Heav'n I'd rather be an Ape, or Bear,
 Or live with Beggars in the open Air,
 Expos'd to Thunder, Lightning, Want and Cold,
 Than be a Prince, and haunted with a Scold.
 Those noisie Monsters much more dreadful are,
 Than threatening Comets, Plagues, or bloody War.
 Grant Providence (if such a Thing there be)
 They never may from Hoarsenesses be free.
 May on their Tongues as many Blisters grow
 As they have Teeth; and to increase their Woe,
 Let their Desires by Signs be still convey'd,
 And talking be for ever Penal made.

Parson. Hold, hold : I can't these Interruptions bear ;
 If you don't me, these sacred Truths revere.
 Now, Madam, I'll instruct you to obey,
 And as I promis'd, point you out the way.
 First, to your Husband you your Heart must give,
 He must, alone in your Affection live.
 What e'er he is, you still must think him blest,
 And boast to all that you are truly blest ;
 If Fools should laugh, and cry 'tis but a Jest,
 Yet still look Grave, and vow you are Sincere,
 And undisturb'd their ill-bred Censures bear.
 Do what you can his Kindness to ingage,
 Wink at his Vices, and indulge his Rage.
 How vain are Women in their youthful Days,
 How fond of Courtship, and how proud of Praise,
 What Arts they use, what Methods they devise,
 To be thought Fair, Obliging, Neat and Wise.
 But when they're marry'd, they soon careless grow,
 Neglect their Drefs, and no more Neatness show :
 Their Charms are lost, their Kindness laid aside,
 Smiles turn'd to Frowns, their Wisdom into Pride,
 And they or Sullen are, or always Chide.
 Are these the ways a Husband's Love to gain ?
 Or won't they rather heighten his Disdain ?
 Make him turn Sot, be troublesome and sad,
 Or if he's Fiery, Cholerick and Mad.
 Thus they their Peace industriously destroy,
 And rob themselves of all their promis'd Joy.
 Next, unto him you must due Honour pay,
 And at his Feet your Top-knot Glories lay ;
 The *Persian* Ladies Chalk you out the way :
 They humbly on their Heads a Foot do wear,
 As I have Read, but yet the Lord knows where :
 That Badge of Homage graceful does appear,
 Wou'd the good Custom were in fashion here.
 Also to him you inward Reverence owe ;
 If he's a Fool, you must not think him so ;
 Nor yet indulge one mean contemptuous Thought,
 Or fancy he can e'er commit a Fault.

Nor

Nor must your Deference be alone confin'd
 Unto the hid Recesses of your Mind,
 But must in all your Actions be display'd,
 And visible to each Spectator made.
 With him, well pleas'd, and always chearful live,
 And to him still respectful Titles give.
 Call him your Lord, and your good Breeding show,
 And do not rudely too familiar grow:
 Nor like some Country Matrons call him Names,
 As *John*, or *Geffrey*, *William*, *George* or *James*;
 Or what's much worse, and ne're to be forgot,
 Those courser Terms of *Sloven*, *Clown*, or *Sot*;
 For tho' perhaps they may be justly due,
 Yet must not, Madam, once be spoke by you:
 Soft winning Language will become you best;
 Ladies ought not to Rail, tho' but in Jest.
 Lastly, to him you Fealty must pay,
 And his Commands without dispute obey.
 A blind Obedience you from Guilt secures,
 And if you err, the Fault is his, not yours.
 What I have taught you, will not tirefom prove,
 If as you ought, you can but truly love:
 Honour and Homage then no Task will be;
 And we shall, sure, as few ill Husbands see,
 As now good Wives: They'l Prodigies appear,
 Like Whales and Comets, shew some Danger near.
 Now to Improvement I with hast will run,
 Be short in that, and then my Work is done.
 To you, Sir, First, I will my self apply,
 To you, who are more fortunate than I,
 And yet are free from the dire Gordian Tye.
 You that Religion ought to love, and praise,
 Which does you thus above the Females raise;
 Next me admire, who can such Comments make,
 And kindly wrest the Scripture for your Sake:
 And now if you dare try a marry'd State,
 You'l have no Reason to accuse your Fate,
 Since I have told 'em, if they'll be good Wives,
 Thy must Submit, and flatter all their Lives.

You,

You, who already drag the Nuptial Chain,
 Will now have no occasion to complain,
 Since they beyond their Sphere no more will tow;
 But for the future own your Sovereign Pow'r:
 And being induc'd by this Advice of mine,
 To you their Sense and Liberty resign:
 Turn Fools and Slaves, that they the more may please:
 Now it is fit for Gifts so vast as these,
 We should some little Gratitude exprefs,
 And be more Complaisant in our Address:
 Bear with their Faults, their weakneses of Mind,
 When they are Penitent, we shoud be kind.
 And that their Faith we may the more secure,
 For them some Inconveniencies indure:
 When they're in Danger, their Defenders prove;
 'Twill shew at once, our Valour, and our Love.
 But let it be our more immediate Care
 To make 'em these unerring Rules revere:
 Bid 'em attentively each Precept read;
 And tell 'em, they're as holy as their Creed:
 Besure each Morning ere they Eat or Pray,
 That they with Care the sacred Lesson say:
 This, will our Quiet, and their Souls secure,
 And both our Happiness, and theirs ensure.
 I on their Duty cou'd with ease inlarge,
 But I would not too much their Memories charge;
 They're weak, and shoud they over-loaden be,
 They'll soon forget what has been said by me;
 Which Heav'n avert! since it much Thought has cost,
 And who wou'd have such wond'rous Rhetorick lost?

Meliss. A Mouse the labouring Mountain does disclose;
 What rais'd my Wonder, my Derision grows.
 With mighty Pomp you your Harangue begun,
 And with big Words my fixt Attention won.
 Each studied Period was with Labour wrought,
 But destitute of Reason and of Thought.
 What you meant Praise upon your selves reflects,
 Each Sentence is a Satyr on your Sex.

If we on you such Obloquies had thrown,
 We had not, sure, one peaceful Minute known:
 But you are Wise, and still know what is best,
 And with your selves may be allow'd to Jest.

Parf. How dare you treat me with so much neglect?
 My sacred Function calls for more Respect.

Melissa. I've still rever'd your Order as Divine;
 And when I see unblemish'd Vertue Shine,
 When solid Learning, and substantial Sense,
 Are joyn'd with unaffected Eloquence;
 When Lives and Doctrines of a Piece are made,
 And holy Truths with humble Zeal convey'd;
 When free from Passion, Bigottry and Pride,
 Not sway'd by Interest, nor to Parties ty'd,
 Contemning Riches, and abhorring Strife,
 And shunning all the noise Poms of Life,
 You live the awful Wonders of your Time,
 Without the least suspicion of a Crime:
 I shall with Joy the highest Deference pay,
 And heedfully attend to all you say.
 From such, Reproofs shall always welcome prove,
 As being th' Effects of Piety and Love.
 But those from me can challenge no Respect,
 Who on us all without just Cause reflect:
 Who without Mercy all the Sex decry,
 And into open Defamations fly:
 Who think us Creatures for Derision made,
 And the Creator with his Work upbraid:
 What he call'd Good, they proudly think not so,
 And with their Malice, their Prophaneness show.
 'Tis hard we should be by the Men despis'd,
 Yet kept from knowing what wou'd make us priz'd:
 Debarr'd from Knowledge, banish'd from the Schools,
 And with the utmost Industry bred Fools.
 Laugh'd out of Reason, jested out of Sense,
 And nothing left but Native Innocence:
 Then told we are incapable of Wit,
 And only for the meanest Drudgeries fit.

Made Slaves to serve their Luxury and Pride,
 And with innumerable Hardships try'd,
 Till Pitying Heav'n release us from our Pain,
 Kind Heav'n to whom alone we dare complain,
 Th' ill-natur'd World will no Compassion show;
 Such as are wretched, it wou'd still have so:
 It gratifies its Envy and its Spight;
 The most in others Miseries take Delight.
 While we are present they some Pity spare,
 And Feast us on a thin Repast of Air:
 Look Grave and Sigh, when we our Wrongs relate,
 And in a Complement accuse our Fate:
 Blame those to whom we our Misfortunes owe,
 And all the Signs of real Friendship show.
 But when we're absent, we their Sport are made,
 They fan the Flame, and our Oppressors aid;
 Joyn with the Stronger, the victorious Side,
 And all our Suff'rings, all our Grievs deride.
 Those generous Few, whom kinder Thoughts inspire,
 And who the Happiness of all desire;
 Who wish we were from barbarous Usage free,
 Exempt from Toils, and shameful Slavery,
 Yet let us unprov'd, mispend our Hours,
 And to mean Purposes imploy our nobler Pow'rs.
 They think if we our Thoughts can but exprefs,
 And know but how to Work, to Dance and Dress,
 It is enough, as much as we should mind,
 As if we were for nothing else design'd,
 But made, like Puppets, to divert Mankind.
 O that my Sex would all such Toys despise;
 And only Study to be Good, and Wise:
 Inspect themselves, and every Blemish find,
 Search all the close Recesses of the Mind,
 And leave no Vice, no Ruling Passion there,
 Nothing to raise a Blush, or cause a Fear:
 Their Memories with solid Notions fill,
 And let their Reason dictate to their Will,
 Instead of Novels, Histories peruse,
 And for their Guides the wiser Ancients chuse,

Thro

Thro' all the Labyrinths of Learning go,
 And grow more humble, as they more do know.
 By doing this, they will Respect procure,
 Silence the Men, and lasting Fame secure;
 And to themselves the best Companions prove,
 And neither fear their Malice, nor desire their Love.

Sir Wil. Had you the Learning you so much desire,
 You, sure, wou'd nothing, but your selves admire:
 All our Addresses wou'd be then in vain,
 And we no longer in your Hearts shou'd Reign:
 Sighs wou'd be lost, and Ogles cast away,
 You'd laugh at all we do, and all we say.
 No Courtship then durst by the Beaux be made
 To any thing above a Chamber Maid.
 Gay Cloaths, and Periwigs wou'd useles prove;
 None but the Men of Sense wou'd dare to love:
 With such, Heav'n knows, this Isle does not abound,
 For one wise Man, Ten thousand Fools are found;
 Who all must at an awful distance wait,
 And vainly curse the rigour of their Fate.
 Then blame us not if we our Interest Mind,
 And would have Knowledge to our selves confin'd,
 Since that alone Pre-eminence does give,
 And rob'd of it we should unvalu'd live.
 While You are ignorant, We are secure,
 A little Pain will your Esteem procure.
 Nonsense well cloath'd will pass for solid Sense,
 And well pronounc'd, for matchless Eloquence:
 Boldness for Learning, and a foreign Air
 For nicest Breeding with th' admiring Fair.

Sir John. By Heav'n I wish 'twere by the Laws decreed
 They never more should be allow'd to Read.
 Books are the Bane of States, the Plagues of Life,
 But both conjoyn'd, when studied by a Wife:
 They nourish Factions, and increase Debate,
 Teach needless things, and causeless Fears create.
 From Plays and Novels they learn how to Plot,
 And from your Sermons all their Cant is got:
 From those they learn the damn'd intriguing way
 How to attract, and how their Snares to lay:

How to delude the Jealous Husband's Care,
 Silence his Doubts, and lull asleep his Fear :
 And when discover'd, by the Last they're taught
 With Shews of Zeal to palliate their Fault ;
 To look Demure, and talk in such a Strain,
 You'd swear they never would be ill again.

Parf. You're in the Right : Good things they misapply ;
 Yet not in Books, but them, the Fault does lie :
 Plays are of use to cultivate our Parts,
 They teach us how to win our Hearers Hearts :
 Soft moving Language for the Pulpit's fit,
 'Tis there we consecrate the Poet's Wit :
 But Women were not for this Province made,
 And shou'd not our Prerogative invade ;
 What e'er they know shou'd be from us convey'd :
 We their Preceptors and their Guides shou'd prove,
 And teach them what to hate, and what to Love.
 But from our Sermons they no ill can learn,
 They're there instructed in their true Concern ;
 Told what they must, and what they must not be ;
 And shew'd the utmost Bounds of Liberty.

Sir Wil. Madam, since we none of your Beauty share,
 You shou'd content your selves with being Fair :
 That is a Blessing, much more Great, than all
 That we can Wisdom, or can Science call :
 Such beauteous Faces, such bewitching Eyes,
 Who wou'd not more than musty Authors prize ?
 Such wondrous Charms will much more Glory yield
 Than all the Honours of the dusty Field :
 Or all those Ivy Wreaths that Wit can give,
 And make you more admir'd, more reverenc'd live.
 To you, the knowing World their Vows do pay,
 And at your Feet their learned Trophies lay ;
 And your Commands with eager haste obey.
 By all my Hopes, by all that's Good I swear,
 I'd rather be some celebrated Fair,
 Than wise as *Solon*, or than *Crasus* Heir.
 Or have my Memory well stuff'd with all
 Those Whimseys, which they high-raisd notions call.

Melissa. Beauty's a Trifle merits not my Care.
 I'd rather *Æsop's* ugly Visage wear,
 Joy'd with his Mind, than be a Fool, and Fair.

Brightness of Thought, and an extensive View
 Of all the Wonders Nature has to shew;
 So clear, so strong, and so enlarg'd a Sight
 As can pierce thro' the gloomy Shades of Night,
 Trace the first Heroes to their dark Abodes,
 And find the Origine of Men and Gods;
 See Empires rise, and Monarchies decay,
 And all the Changes of the World survey:
 The ancient and the modern Fate of Kings,
 From whence their Glory, or Misfortune springs;
 Would please me more, than if in one combin'd,
 I'd all the Graces of the Female Kind.
 But do not think 'tis an ambitious Heat,
 To you I'll leave the being Rich and Great:
 Your's be the Fame, the Profit, and the Praise;
 We'll neither Rob you of your Vines, nor Bays:
 Nor will we to Dominion once aspire;
 You shall be Chief, and still your selves admire.
 The Tyrant Man may still possess the Throne;
 'Tis in our Minds that we would Rule alone:
 Those unseen Empires give us leave to sway,
 And to our Reason private Homage pay:
 Our struggling Passions within Bounds confine,
 And to our Thoughts their proper Tasks assign.
 This, is the Use we would of Knowledge make,
 You quickly would the good Effects partake.
 Our Conversations it would soon refine,
 And in our Words, and in our Actions shine:
 And by a pow'rful Influence on our Lives,
 Make us good Friends, good Neighbours, and good Wives.
 Of this, some great Examples have been shown,
 Women remarkable for Virtue known:
 Jealous of Honour, and upright of Life,
 Serene in Dangers, and averse to Strife.
 Patient when wrong'd, from Pride and Envy free,
 Strangers to Falsehood and to Calumny:
 Of every noble Quality possess;
 Well skill'd in Science, and with Wisdom bless'd.
 In Ancient Greece, where Merit still was crown'd,
 Some such as these in her Records were found.

Rome her *Lucretia*, and her *Porcia* show,
 And we to her the fam'd *Cornelia* owe :
 A Place with them does Great *Zenobia* claim ;
 With these I cou'd some modern Ladies Name,
 Who help to fill the bulky Lists of Fame :
 Women renown'd for Knowledge, and for Sense,
 For sparkling Wit, and charming Eloquence.
 But they're enough : at least to make you own,
 If we less Wise and Rational are grown,
 'Tis owning to your Management alone.
 If like th' Ancients you wou'd generous prove,
 And in our Education shew your Love ;
 Into our Souls wou'd noble Thoughts instill,
 Our Infant-Minds with bright Ideas fill :
 Teach us our Time in Learning to imploy,
 And place in solid Knowledge all our Joy :
 Perswade us trifling Authors to refuse,
 And when we think, the usefulst Subjects chuse :
 Inform us how a prosperous State to bear,
 And how to Act when Fortune is severe ;
 We shou'd be Wiser, and more blameless live,
 And less occasion for your Censures give :
 At least in us less Failings you wou'd see,
 And our Discourses wou'd less tiresom be :
 Tho' Wit like yours we never hope to gain,
 Yet from Impertinence we should refrain,
 And learn to be less Talkative and Vain.
 Unto the strictest Rules we should submit,
 And what we ought to do, think always fit.
 Never dispute, when Duty leads the way,
 But its Commands without a Sigh Obey.
 To Reason, not to Humour, give the Reins,
 And be the same in Palaces and Chains.
 But your humble Suit will still decline ;
 To have us wise was never your Design :
 You'll keep us Fools, that we may be your Jest ;
 They who know least, are ever treated best.
 If we do well, with Care it is conceal'd ;
 But every Errour, every Fault's reveal'd :
 While to each other you still partial prove,
 Can see no Failures, and even Vices love.

The

The bloody Masters of the martial Trade,
 Are prais'd for Mischiefs, and for Murders pay'd.
 The noisy Lawyers, if they can but bawl,
 Soon grace the Wool-lacks, and adorn the Hall.
 The envy'd Great, those darling Sons of Fame,
 Who carry a Majestic Terror in their Name;
 Who like the Demy Gods are plac'd on High,
 And seem th' exalted Natives of the Sky:
 Who sway'd by Pride, and by Self-love betray'd,
 Are Slaves to their imperious Passions made,
 Are with a Servile Awe by you rever'd;
 Prais'd for their Follies, for their Vices fear'd.
 The Courtier, who with every Wind can veer,
 And midst the Mounting Waves can safely steer;
 Who all can flatter; and with wondrous grace,
 Low cringing Bows, and a designing Face,
 A smiling Look, and a dissembl'd Hate,
 Can hug a Friend, and hasten on his Fate,
 Has your Applause; his Policy you praise;
 And to the Skies his prudent Conduct raise.
 The Scholar, if he can a Verb decline,
 And has the Skill to reckon Nine times Nine,
 Or but the Nature of a Fly define;
 Can Mouth some Greek, and knows where *Athens* stood,
 Tho' he perhaps is neither Wise, nor Good,
 Is fit for *Oxford*; where when he has been,
 Each Colledge view'd, and each grave Doctor seen,
 He mounts a Pulpit, and th' exalted Height
 Makes Vapours dance before his troubl'd Sight;
 And he no more can see, nor think aright.
 Yet such as these your Consciences do Guide,
 And or'e your Actions and your Words preside.
 Blame you for Faults which they themselves commit,
 Arraign your Judgment, and condemn your Wit:
 Instil their Notions with the greatest Ease,
 And Hood-wink'd lead you where so'er they please.
 The formal Justice, and the jolly Knight,
 Who in their Money place their chief delight;
 Who watch the Kitchen, and survey the Field,
 To see what each will to their Luxury yield.
 Who Eat and Pun, then Quarrel, Rail and Drink,
 But never are at leisure once to Think:

Who

Who weary of Domestick Cares being grown,
 And yet, like Children, frightened when alone,
 (Detesting Books) still Hunt, or Hawk, or Play,
 And in laborious Trifles wait the Day,
 Are lik'd by you, their Actions still approv'd,
 And if they're Rich, are sure to be belov'd.
 These are the Props, the Glory of the State,
 And on their Nod depends the Nation's Fate:
 These weave the Nets, where little Flies betray'd,
 Are Victims to relentless Justice made,
 While they themselves condemn the Snare's that they
 have laid;

As Bonds too weak such mighty Men to hold
 As scorn to be by any Laws controul'd.
 Physicians with hard Words and haughty Looks,
 And promis'd Health, bait their close-cover'd Hooks:
 Like Birds of Prey, while they your Gold can scent,
 You are their Care, their utmost help is lent;
 But when your Guineas cease, you to the Span are sent,
 Yet still you Court 'em, think you cannot die
 If you've a Son of *Aesculapius* by.

The Tradesmen you Careless, altho' you know
 They wealthy by their Cheats and Flatteries grow;
 You seem to credit every Word they say,
 And as they sell, with the same Conscience pay:
 Nay to the Mob, those Dregs of Humane kind,
 Those Animals you flight, you're wond'rous kind;
 To them you Cring, and tho' they are your Sport,
 Yet still you fawn, and still their Favour Court.
 Thus on each other daily you impose,
 And all for Wit, and dextrous Cunning goes.

'Tis we alone hard Measure still must find;
 But spite of you, we'll to our selves be kind:
 Your Censures flight, your little Tricks despise,
 And make it our whole Business to be wise.
 The mean low trivial Cares of Life disdain,
 And Read and Think, and Think and Read again,
 And on our Minds bestow the utmost Pain.
 Our Souls with strictest Morals we'll adorn,
 And all your little Arts of wheedling Scorn;

Be humble, mild, forgiving, just and true,
 Sincere to all, respectful unto you,
 While as becomes you, sacred Truths you teach,
 And live those Sermons you to others Preach.
 With want of Duty none shall us upbraid,
 Where-e'er 'tis due, it shall be nicely pay'd.
 Honour and Love we'll to our Husbands give,
 And ever Constant and Obedient live :
 If they are Ill, we'll try by gentle ways
 To lay those Tempests which their Passions raise ;
 But if our soft Submissions are in vain,
 We'll bear our Fate, and never once complain :
 Unto our Friends the tenderest kindness show,
 Be wholly theirs, no separate Interest know :
 With them their Dangers and their Suffrings share,
 And make their Persons, and their Fame our Care.
 The Poor we'll feed, to the Distress'd be kind,
 And strive to Comfort each afflicted Mind.
 Visit the Sick, and try their Pains to ease ;
 Not without Grief the meanest Wretch displease :
 And by a Goodness as diffus'd as Light,
 To the pursuit of Vertue all invite.
 Thus will we live, regardless of your hate,
 Till re-admitted to our former State ;
 Where, free from the Confinement of our Clay
 In glorious Bodies we shall bask in Day,
 And with inlightned Minds new Scenes survey.
 Scenes, much more bright than any here below,
 And we shall then the whole of Nature know ;
 See all her Springs, her secret Turnings view,
 And be as knowing, and as wise as you.
 With generous Spirits of a Make Divine,
 In whose blest Minds Celestial Virtues shine,
 Whose Reason, like their Station, is sublime,
 And who see clearly thro' the Mists of Time,
 Those puzzling Glooms where busy Mortals stray,
 And still grope on, but never find their way.

We

We shall, well-pleas'd, eternally converse,
And all the Sweets of Sacred Love possess:
Love, freed from all the gross Allays of Sense,
So pure, so strong, so constant, so intense,
That it shall all our Faculties imploy,
And leave no Room for any thing but Joy.

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(22)

And leave no Room for any thing but Joy.
That it shall all our Faculties employ,
So pure, so strong, so constant, so intense,
I love, freed from all the gross Allays of Sense,
And all the sweets of sacred Love possess:
We shall, well-pleas'd, eternally converse.

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